

**PHILOSOPHY 1290 (A03) – CRITICAL THINKING
COURSE SYLLABUS**

1130-1220 MWF
240 UC

Instructor: Dave Hampton
SPC 233

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Office Hours: 1230-1330 MW

Course Description:

The advent of modern communication and computing technologies has vastly increased the quantity of information available to the citizen, the accessibility to that information, to the means of distributing it, and to the speed with which it is available. While this is a positive development in many respects it has not led to a decrease in epistemic dependence and, to some degree, has contributed to the erosion of individual reading comprehension and critical reasoning skills. This is a matter of concern for epistemic autonomy, the ability to reason critically for oneself, stands at the heart of both enlightenment values and the pursuit of truth. The focus of this course will be upon the fundamentals of argumentation that are necessary to exercise epistemic autonomy. We will devote our attention to argument construction, comprehension and evaluation; skills that the student in any academic or professional discipline will find essential.

Required Text:

Browne, N., and Keeley, S., *Asking the Right Questions, A Guide to Critical Thinking* 10th Ed (Pearson, 2012)

Student Evaluation:

Assignments	50%
Mid-Term Examination	20%
Final Examination	30%

Important Note: Final course grades are subject to the approval of the Faculty of Arts and may be subject to change in order to fall within the parameters set by this Faculty, or in order to meet any new policies implemented by the Faculty.

Evaluation Explanations:

Assignments: There will be ten take-home assignments due throughout the term and one bonus assignment (which, if completed, will replace the student's lowest scored assignment assuming that the grade on the bonus assignment is higher). Each assignment will be equally weighted (5% of the final course grade). The assignments will consist of exercises calculated to assess the student's understanding of the concepts and skills studied in that section of the course.

Examinations: The mid-term examination will be held in class on October 21st. It will require the student to diagram an argument and may consist of short answer questions as well. Students will be responsible for all material up to the Mid-term for this examination. The final examination will be scheduled in the end-of-term exam period. It will be 2 hours long. The final examination will consist of short answer questions and argument evaluation exercises; students will be responsible for all material covered since the mid-term examination.

Late Policy: Overdue work will only be accepted with a documented medical excuse or on the basis of a serious personal crisis. Note that failing to manage one's time is not a 'serious personal crisis.'

Academic Dishonesty: Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating and examination impersonation (see the relevant sections of the University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar, 2010-11).

Approximate Grade Scale:

A+	93%+	A	87-92%	B+	80-86%	B	74-79%
C+	68-73%	C	62-67%	D	55-61%	F	<55%

APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE

Sept 9	Course Introduction & Expectations
Sept 12, 14 Sept 16	Identifying Arguments , Read Chapters 1 & 2, Assignment 1 Distributed on Sept 12 Assignment 1 Due
Sept 19, 21 Sept 23	Comprehending Arguments: Premises and Conclusions , Read Chapter 3, Assignment 2 Distributed on Sept 19 Assignment 2 Due
Sept 26, 28 Sept 30	Comprehending Arguments: Essay Structure , no reading, Assignment 3 Distributed on Sept 26 Assignment 3 Due
Oct 3, 5 Oct 7	Continue with Essay Structure, no additional reading, Assignment 4 Distributed on Oct 3 Assignment 4 Due, Assignment 5 Distributed
Oct 10 Oct 12 Oct 14	Thanksgiving – No classes Comprehending Arguments: Ambiguity , Read Chapter 4 Assignment 5 Due
Oct 17 Oct 19 Oct 21	Mid-Term Exam Preparation Argument Evaluation: Introduction , no reading Mid-Term Exam
Oct 24 Oct 26, 28	Go over Mid-Term Exam Premise Acceptability , Read Chapter 7, Assignment 6 Distributed on Oct 26
Oct 31 Nov 2, 4	Assignment 6 Due Premise Unacceptability , Read Chapter 11, Assignment 7 Distributed on Nov 2
Nov 7 Nov 9 Nov 11	Assignment 7 Due Deductive Validity , Read Chapter 6, Assignment 8 Distributed on Nov 9 Remembrance Day – No classes
Nov 14 Nov 16, 18	Assignment 8 Due Inductive Validity , Read Chapter 8, Assignment 9 Distributed on Nov 16
Nov 21 Nov 23, 25	Assignment 9 Due Strong & Weak Arguments , Assignment 10 Distributed on Nov 23
Nov 28 Nov 30, Dec 1	Assignment 10 Due Read Chapter 12, Bonus Assignment 11 Distributed on Nov 30
Dec 5 Dec 7	Assignment 11 Due Final Exam Preparation